

PASSPORT TO THE FUTURE: OHIO'S PLAN FOR WORLD LANGUAGES





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TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Council's Charge 1

The Foreign Language Advisory Council's Vision 3

Increasing Ohio's World Language Capacity
for the Global Economy 4

World Language Education in Ohio 7

The Foreign Language Advisory Council's Recommendations . . . 10

Building on a Strong Foundation 30

Selected References and Resources 37

Acknowledgements 40

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THE COUNCIL'S CHARGE

Amended Substitute Senate Bill 311 called for the creation of the Foreign Language Advisory Council. The members of the Council, who represent Ohio's many diverse sectors, were selected in March 2007, by the State Board of Education through recommendations from the Ohio Department of Education, the Ohio Board of Regents, the Partnership for Continued Learning, the Office of the Governor and from nominations from the field.

The Council was charged with proposing a statewide foreign language implementation plan, which includes recommendations for legislation to implement the plan by the 2014-2015 school year. The plan must be presented to the State Board of Education, the superintendent of public instruction, the Ohio Board of Regents, the Partnership for Continued Learning, the governor, the speaker and minority leader of the Senate, and chairpersons and ranking minority members of standing committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate that consider education legislation, by December 31, 2007.

Specifically, the Foreign Language Advisory Council was asked to consider the following three areas:

Access to PreK-16 Foreign Language Programs

- Facilitating foreign language acquisition across grades kindergarten through 12, rather than limiting it to high school.
- The extent to which students should focus on critical languages of economically competitive countries.

Foreign Language Instructional Delivery

- Best practices for implementing PreK-16 solutions to course instruction in foreign languages.
- Multiple course-delivery models, including distance learning, online learning, and synchronous and asynchronous Web-based delivery.



Defining Proficiency and Awarding Credit

- Defining a proficiency-based approach to earning credit for foreign language that can be reflected on students' high school transcripts.
- Allowing for the proficiency-based approach to apply to non-native English speakers in their native languages.

THE COUNCIL'S WORK

The Council met five times beginning in April 2007. Between meetings, Council members revised and refined their thinking through electronic communication in a shared, virtual environment.

The Council brought multiple perspectives and ideas to the discussion based on their various roles as parents, K-16 foreign language educators, career and technical educators, principals and superintendents, and business and government representatives.

Council members began their work by reviewing state, national and international data; reports from a broad range of organizations; proficiency descriptions; and existing instruments that assess language proficiency. Three committees – Access to PreK-16 Language Programs, Foreign Language Instructional Delivery, and Defining Proficiency and Awarding Credit – were formed to draft specific recommendations and strategies related to each aspect of the Council's charge. They used a systems approach to scaffold their thinking. These systems include instructional systems; accountability; and human, fiscal and community resources.

After thoughtful consideration of each committee's work, the Council combined the major recommendations and strategies into a workable plan. The plan builds on existing infrastructures and provides a clear path to increasing opportunities for Ohioans to learn a variety of languages for the workplace and their daily lives.

The recommendations were shared with a broad range of stakeholder groups and professional associations. In addition, the recommendations were posted on the Ohio Department of Education's Web site and an invitation to provide feedback was included in department newsletters.

The Council's shared conclusions build a solid foundation for increasing foreign language proficiency and cultural understanding to ensure Ohio's economic and strategic well-being far into the future.

THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE ADVISORY COUNCIL'S VISION

Ohioans are living and working in a global age. Increasing world language capacity and global awareness are paramount to Ohio's continued economic and strategic success.

Ohio is no longer competing for jobs with neighboring states. It is competing with other countries. In this 21st century economy, Ohio businesses need a competitive edge to attract and retain investment from across the globe. Proficiency in languages other than English and knowledge of other cultures are key to Ohio's ability to succeed in the global economy; to collaborate on scientific research; and to solve security, environmental and health problems.

The Foreign Language Advisory Council's vision reflects this critical need:

VISION

Every Ohioan will have the opportunity to develop a functional level of proficiency in at least one language other than English, and more Ohioans will develop advanced language skills tied to specific career fields. Ohio's citizens will thus be better equipped to engage in the global marketplace and to communicate effectively with citizens from around the world.

Actualizing this vision will be challenging, but is attainable. It will require a commitment to language education, starting with our youngest children and continuing through adulthood. Therefore:

- We envision all students having opportunities to learn languages in long, uninterrupted sequences of instruction beginning in elementary school, without repeating what they already learned as they move through the grade levels;
- We envision creating more opportunities to learn languages that have always held importance for Ohio, such as French, Spanish, German, Latin and American Sign Language, while building capacity in languages critical for economic and strategic importance, such as Chinese, Japanese and Arabic;
- We envision capitalizing on proven program models for learners of all ages, with the goal of developing long sequences of language instruction that lead more students to advanced levels of proficiency while reinforcing skills and concepts from across the curriculum;
- We envision using multiple means to deliver language instruction throughout the learning day that include face-to-face instruction and a variety of synchronous and asynchronous delivery methods, so that Ohioans have many opportunities to learn languages;
- We envision granting world language credit based on demonstration of proficiency; and
- We envision increasing the number and building the skills of qualified world language instructors in Ohio, so that all students will have access to quality learning experiences that enable them to become proficient in a world language.

“Most education systems around the globe prepare their students to function in their national language and at least one additional language. A survey of 19 countries found that 16 provide widespread or compulsory foreign language instruction to students by the upper elementary grades.”

—Pufahl, Rhodes, & Christian (2001)

INCREASING OHIO'S WORLD LANGUAGE CAPACITY FOR THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

There is a growing demand from business and government leaders, policy makers, and parents for citizens who are proficient in other languages and knowledgeable about other cultures. The society that American children will inherit is becoming increasingly global and proficiency in world languages will enable them to cultivate positive relationships with future clients, allies and neighbors.

In response to this demand, two parallel initiatives took place in Ohio in 2007. The Ohio Legislature mandated the creation of the Foreign Language Advisory Council to develop this plan for world language instruction in the state. At the same time, the U.S. Departments of Defense, Labor and Commerce chose Ohio as one of three states to articulate language needs for developing a strategic national plan.

In June 2007, representatives from education, business and government met to discuss Ohio's language needs through the federal initiative. In their final report, *2007 U.S. Language Summits: Ohio Language Roadmap for the 21st Century*, participants from the Ohio Language Summit emphasized "the importance of foreign language skills in building trusting relationships with non-English speakers" locally, nationally and internationally (p. 4).

The general public likewise recognizes that the world is growing smaller and that foreign language proficiency is a valuable skill. According to the Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll on the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools (2007), nearly nine in 10 Americans believe that all children should become proficient in a second language in addition to English; seven in 10 believe that foreign language instruction should begin in elementary school.

The first reason often given for increasing the language proficiency of our citizens is the nation's economy. The United States needs to be prepared for the marketplace of the future. According to the Committee for Economic Development (2006):

To compete successfully in the global marketplace, both U.S.-based multinational corporations, as well as small businesses, increasingly need employees with knowledge of foreign languages and cultures to market products to customers around the globe and to work effectively with foreign employees and partners in other countries.

These ideas were echoed at the Ohio International Summit for Education in April 2007. Ohio companies recognize that foreign markets are their best opportunities for growth because most of the world's population and economic growth is happening outside U.S. borders. It is no longer realistic to expect that people in other countries will "just learn English" or accept goods and services developed for American tastes.

“The skills needed for individuals to compete and prosper in the global economy require a strong foundation in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines, but collaboration and cooperation that are the hallmarks of innovation demand additional skill sets in areas like writing, communications and languages.”

—National Governors Association and Council on Competitiveness (2007)

With globalization, customization and e-commerce, customers all over the world expect companies to meet their specific needs and preferences. Understanding the culture of current and future markets is critical – and speaking the clients’ languages is a major component of understanding the culture.

The second reason often given for increasing language proficiency is national security. The National Security Language Initiative (NSLI) is an interagency initiative of the U.S. Departments of State, Education and Defense and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. In a briefing on the NSLI in 2006, it was recognized that “an essential component of U.S. national security in the post-9/11 world is the ability to engage foreign governments and peoples, especially in critical regions, to encourage reform, promote understanding, convey respect for other cultures and provide an opportunity to learn more about our country and its citizens. To do this, we must be able to communicate in other languages, a challenge for which we are unprepared” (U.S. Department of State, 2006).

The ability of the United States to cultivate trusting relationships worldwide reduces the potential for conflict, increases opportunities for cooperation and advances collective security (“2007 U.S. Language Summits,” p. 4). The NSLI is designed to increase dramatically the number of Americans learning critical need languages such as Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Russian, Hindi and Farsi. It also is designed to create new programs and expand existing programs from kindergarten through university and into the workforce.

The third reason often given for increasing language proficiency is international and domestic well-being. Issues such as the environment, disease and hunger touch all humankind and necessitate strong collaboration across borders for resolution. In their report, *International Education and Foreign Languages: Keys to Securing America's Future* (2007), the Committee to Review the Title VI and Fulbright-Hays International Education Programs noted that domestic language skills and cultural expertise also are “urgently needed,” not only to address economic challenges but also to respond to the needs of an increasingly diverse U.S. population. Professionals in fields including law, health care, social work, tourism, hospitality and education find that their clients have a variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds as these new citizens gain proficiency in English.

Given the growing importance of language proficiency both locally and nationally, national and state boards of education have begun establishing recommendations for world language programs. The National Association of State Boards of Education encourages the incorporation of foreign language study from the early years and as a graduation requirement (“NASBE Study Group,” 2003). In Ohio, the priorities of the State Board of Education for 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 include a focus on internationalizing education:

Ensure that Ohio’s students are prepared to compete in the new global economy by engaging stakeholders in strategic conversations about the changing role of education, improving standards and assessment and benchmarking student achievement against international standards (“State Board Priorities,” 2007-2008).

“Language learning pays off in a variety of ways. But beyond opening doors to friendship and cultural exchange, language skills today make possible new employment opportunities, bold enterprises in business, improved cooperation in humanitarian endeavors, and better understanding on crucial security and political issues.”

—Madeleine Albright, former Secretary of State (as cited in Met, 1998, p. xi)

Yet, Ohio has more to do to meet this vision. In Ohio, world language programs in kindergarten through grade five are scarce; middle school programs serve fewer than a quarter of students. Over half of Ohio's high school students take a foreign language at some point during their secondary studies, usually in grades nine or ten (2006-2007 Education Management Information System [EMIS] data). For those who do take a language, most are enrolled for too short a time to develop functional proficiency. In addition, most language choices have been limited to Western languages. Ohio must increase the number of languages that students have access to, so that they have opportunities to develop language skills needed in business, diplomacy, science and service industries.

World language education programs of today prepare tomorrow's citizens. "Global professionals who are able to establish trusting relationships with speakers of foreign languages will be the product of innovative educational resources that promote lifelong culture and language learning" ("2007 U.S. Language Summits," p. 4). The recommendations and strategies of the Foreign Language Advisory Council are ambitious, but Council members are confident that this report will provide a window into best practices and model programs in world language education and also will offer a vision of the future for language learning.

“Times – and the world – have changed. Globalization has blurred our borders and expanded our horizons. In today's global economy, foreign language skills have become vital to our children's future as members of the workforce and to our nation's future success in the world.”

—John J. Castellani (2007)

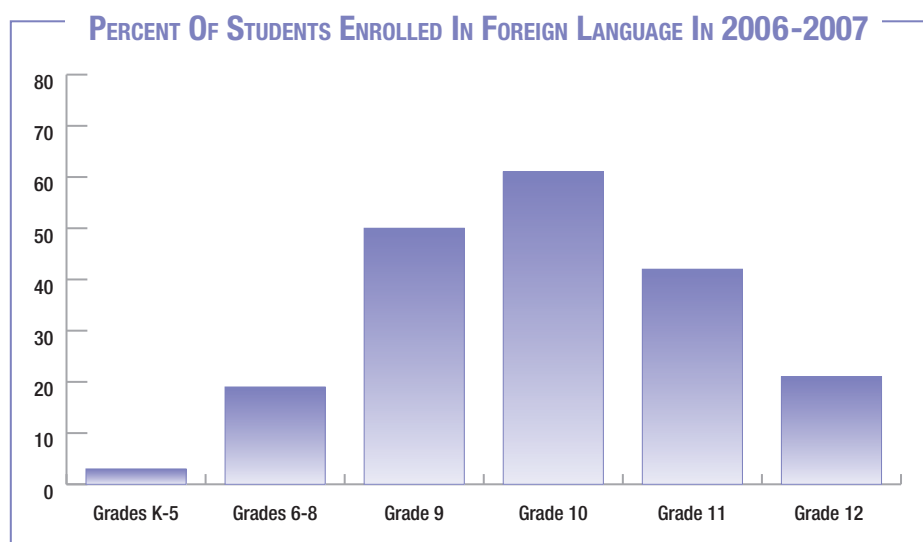


WORLD LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN OHIO

It will take a strong commitment to realize the Council's vision that every student will graduate from high school with at least a basic level of proficiency in a language in addition to English. It is important to see where Ohio currently stands in relation to language learning in order to progress toward this vision.

There is a strong research base for beginning language in preschool and continuing in long sequences of instruction. Public opinion also supports beginning language instruction early (Phi Delta Kappa International, 2007; Scripps Survey Research Center, 2007). In contrast, Ohio's Education Management Information System (EMIS) for 2006-2007 documents that only 3 percent of Ohio students in kindergarten through grade five take a world language.

At the sixth- through eighth-grade level, 19 percent of Ohio students are enrolled in language instruction. In some cases, students earn credit for a level one high school course when the course content is the same as in high school and is taught by a licensed teacher. An array of other programs exists, many of which do not lead to proficiency. Short-term experiences with language learning that last for nine, 12 or 16 weeks are common.



EMIS for 2006-2007 documents that over half of Ohio high school students pursue language instruction at some point during their secondary studies. Most are enrolled for two years during ninth and tenth grade.

Of the 362,879 students enrolled in K-12 language programs in 2006-2007, 93 percent took Western languages, including American Sign Language.

Some 2,568 students took advanced placement (AP) courses in Latin, French, Spanish, German and Russian. Ohio should do more to encourage these long sequences of language that lead to useable skills.

Language instruction in brick-and-mortar settings accounts for more than 99 percent of student enrollment. Only 3,016 students took online language learning opportunities in the 2006-2007 school year. Clearly online and distance education represent untapped possibilities for language learning.

Dual enrollment programs allow students to earn high school and college credit simultaneously. Educational options allow students to earn credit for experiences outside of the conventional classroom settings. Dual enrollment (1 percent) and educational options (less than 1 percent) account for a very small number of the total enrollment for the reporting period 2006-2007.

K-12 LANGUAGE ENROLLMENTS BY LANGUAGE

Western		Non-Western	
Spanish	233,231	Japanese	1,344
French	63,967	Chinese	777
German	23,118	Arabic	716
Latin	11,684	Russian	467
American Sign Language (ASL)	4,847	Hebrew	111
Italian	1,426	Greek	18
		Polish	1
		Swahili	1
Exploratory Foreign Language*			21,171

**Exploratory Foreign Language involves the study of several languages for short periods of time to familiarize students with the cultures and to introduce a few basic phrases in the language. These courses do not lead to proficiency. They occur mostly at the elementary and middle school levels.*

OHIO PERSPECTIVES

Ohio University's Scripps Survey Research Center polled Ohioans (2007) on their views about education in foreign language and culture. Seventy-six percent of respondents believe that it is very or somewhat important for Ohioans to be able to communicate in a foreign language. Reasons given were: Increase national security (86 percent); help international trade (92 percent); better understand the cultures of other countries (79 percent); and increase the ability to serve people in Ohio who speak languages other than English (79 percent). Eighty-four percent also believe that the ability to speak another language will make a person more employable.

In the survey, 67 percent of respondents believe that foreign language programs should begin in the early elementary grades. Another 17 percent said that programs should begin in middle school. Only nine percent believe that language programs should begin in high school, where most language study currently begins in Ohio.


In terms of languages that Ohioans should be able to speak, respondents realize that languages representing the diverse regions of the world are critical to Ohio's well being and economic competitiveness.

Seventy four percent of respondents thought that it is very or somewhat important for immigrants to maintain fluency in their first language. This supports research findings that additive bilingualism enables children to become proficient in English with more ease while maintaining and strengthening their home language.

Citizens are knowledgeable about potential benefits of a multilingual workforce that values other cultures. Overall, these results support requirements for language and culture education in Ohio.



THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE ADVISORY COUNCIL'S RECOMMENDATIONS



Retain capacity in commonly taught languages while building capacity in languages critical for economic and strategic importance.

Provide access to PreK-16 language learning that allows students to build on previous language proficiency.

Use proven programs with the goal of developing long sequences of PreK-16 language learning and advanced levels of proficiency.

Use multiple means to deliver language instruction.

Increase the number and build the capacity of qualified world language instructors in the state of Ohio.

Grant world language credit based on demonstration of proficiency.



RECOMMENDATION

#1

Provide access to a sequence of world language instruction across grades PreK-16, so that instruction at each level builds upon the proficiency that students have attained at an earlier level.

The Foreign Language Advisory Council offers five strategies to meet this recommendation:

- **Provide students with opportunities to attain at least a basic level of proficiency in at least one world language by the end of eighth grade;**
- **Build longer, articulated sequences of world language instruction from ninth grade down rather than from kindergarten up, in order to eliminate gaps between levels;**
- **Enable high school students with prior language proficiency to develop greater proficiency through traditional coursework, online or distance learning, or career-embedded language experiences;**
- **Offer more dual enrollment opportunities for world language learning so that high school students may earn college credit; and**
- **Place students into postsecondary or workforce language learning based on their demonstrated levels of proficiency.**

DISCUSSION

Ohio needs citizens who are proficient in other languages and who are knowledgeable about other cultures in order to expand Ohio businesses in foreign markets, address the challenges of an increasingly diverse state population, and contribute to international understanding and security. Whether they go on to higher education or into the workforce, it is clear that all citizens benefit from knowing a second language.

A common problem with current world language programs is the repetition of previously learned material as students move from elementary to middle school, middle to high school or high school to college. They begin again and again with “Hello, how are you?” as they move from one school to the next rather than advancing to more challenging material. Long, articulated sequences of world language instruction are necessary for reaching the competence required in business, education, service fields and international cooperation.

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

What does it mean to know French or Spanish, Arabic or Chinese? As language teaching became more widespread in the second half of the 20th century, educators and researchers began to realize that learning lists of vocabulary words and grammar rules did not mean that an individual knew a language. The real question was what students could do with the language.

Both in the academic community and in government language schools, there was a search for a way to describe what students could do. The Foreign Service Institute (FSI) developed a proficiency scale for describing the speaking abilities of candidates for foreign service positions, as well as an interview-based evaluation procedure. This scale was refined for academic use during the 1970s and resulted in the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) scale. This scale expanded the lower levels of the original scale in order to be more precise in describing novice and intermediate language learners' proficiency (Hadley, 2001).

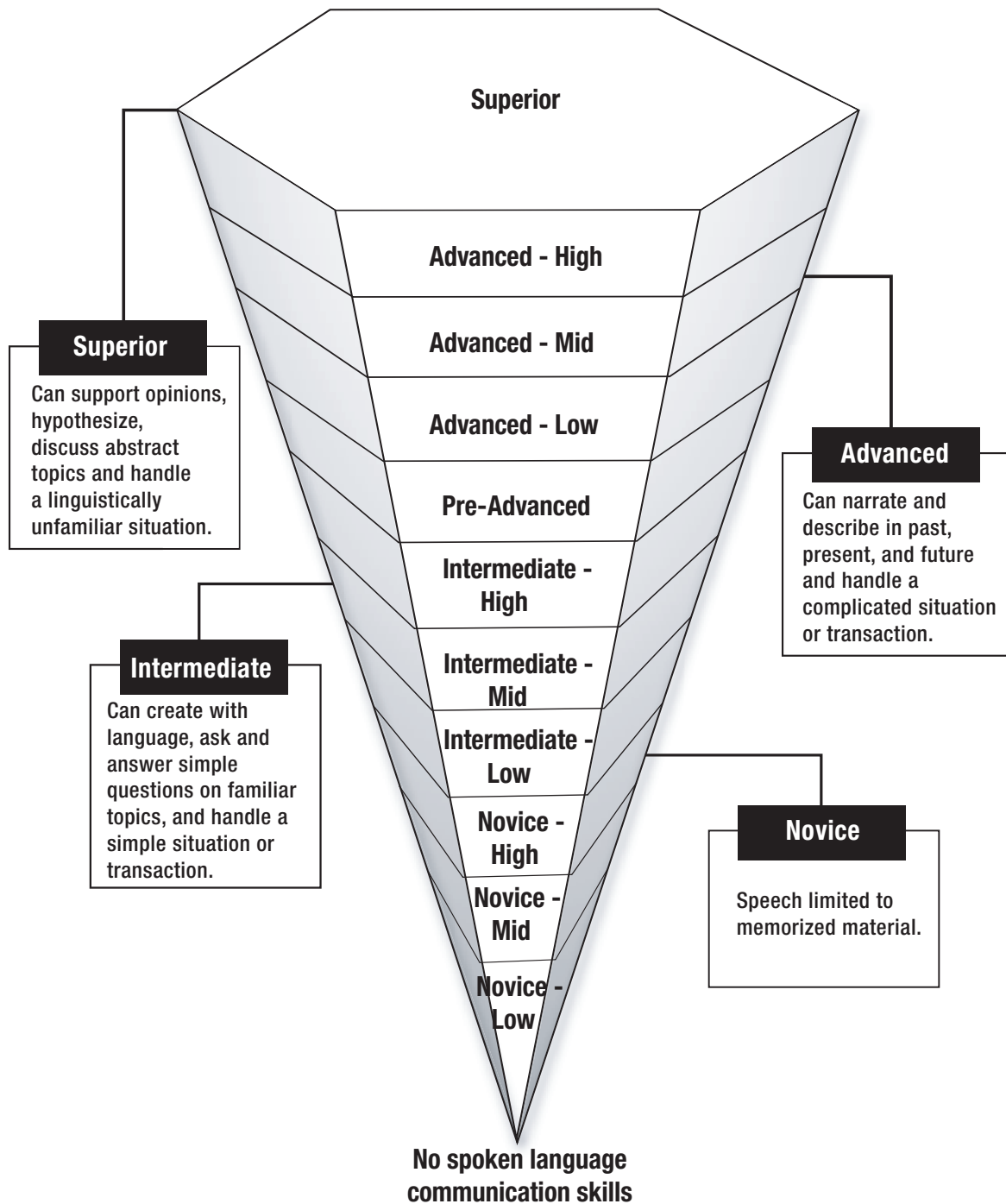
During the 1980s, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) built on the ILR scale to create proficiency guidelines that define and measure language ability in speaking, reading, writing and listening. The scale moves from novice to intermediate to advanced and superior levels. It may be helpful to think of language learning in terms of an inverted pyramid (see figure 1). The further up the scale one moves, the more growth is required in language skill. In other words, moving from novice to intermediate requires relatively little positive change, while moving from intermediate to advanced requires much more (Hadley, 2001).

The levels of proficiency suggest the type of language or understanding that can be expected from someone at that level. However, at each level there will be variation in the speaker's performance. For example, not all novice-high speakers will be able to address the same topics with the same ease. In addition, those same speakers will begin to show some of the characteristics of intermediate speakers. They cannot, however, sustain performance at the higher level. This is true as well for intermediate-high speakers who show some of the characteristics of advanced speakers (Hadley, 2001).

The proficiency guidelines were initially designed to describe the language performance of adult language learners. ACTFL created its *Performance Guidelines for K-12 Learners* in order to describe characteristics of language users at various stages of learning and account for the various entry points for language study in the United States. Some students begin in elementary school, while others begin in middle or high school. Like the proficiency guidelines, the performance guidelines describe how well novice, intermediate and pre-advanced learners of a language function in the language (ACTFL, 1998).

Figure 1

ACTFL Performance and Proficiency Guidelines for Language Learners



RECOMMENDATION

#2

Retain capacity in commonly taught languages such as French, Spanish, German, Latin and American Sign Language, while building capacity in languages critical for economic and strategic importance, such as Arabic, Japanese and Chinese.

The Foreign Language Advisory Council offers two strategies to meet this recommendation:

- Encourage schools and community-based providers to offer multiple languages to meet individual, community and state needs; and
- Create networks to share resources and teachers needed for language learning.

DISCUSSION

The notion of which languages are “critical” to the state and the nation has shifted since the launch of Sputnik in 1957 prompted calls for the teaching of Russian. Depending on whether discussion centers on the needs of the economy, diplomacy or local service agencies, the languages that are considered critical vary widely.

To take the pulse of current needs, language summits funded by the U.S. Departments of Commerce, Defense and Labor were held in Oregon, Texas and Ohio in 2007. The report, *2007 U.S. Language Summits: The Ohio Language Roadmap for the 21st Century*, made the following recommendations regarding extended sequences of language study in Ohio: Based on Ohio’s current and anticipated foreign language needs, languages that should be taught in extended sequences include (in alphabetical order): Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Russian and Spanish (p. 7).



The Ohio Department of Development's International Trade Division (ITD) promotes the export of Ohio products and services to strengthen Ohio's economy and advance its leadership position in the global marketplace. Ohio's international trade offices are located in Brussels, Belgium; Tokyo, Japan; Hong Kong and Shanghai, People's Republic of China; Toronto, Canada; Tel Aviv, Israel; Mexico City, Mexico; Sao Paulo, Brazil*; Santiago, Chile*; Buenos Aires, Argentina*; and Johannesburg, South Africa*.

As a result of these efforts, considerable international corporate investment in Ohio has occurred. The chart below shows employment resulting from international investments in Ohio.

International Corporate Investors in Ohio	Number of Ohioans Employed
Canada	12,346
France	11,340
Germany	36,760
Japan	59,798
The Netherlands	12,485
21 additional countries where the primary language is not English	21,970

(Ohio Department of Development, 2006).

**Joint offices through partnership with the Council of Great Lakes Governors.*

On a national level, the National Security Language Initiative (NSLI), launched in 2006, seeks to increase the number of Americans who are mastering “critical need languages” and to ensure that they begin studying them at younger ages. The primary concern of the NSLI is the ability of the United States to communicate with foreign governments and peoples. This initiative promotes the teaching of Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Hindi, Farsi and Turkish.

These languages were chosen by the Initiative partners for the first year of NSLI based on “a thorough study of the economic and security needs of the country”. The NSLI is not attempting to replace the languages already being taught in schools, but rather to include languages that have been identified as becoming “more important in today’s world”.

— U.S. Department of Education (2006)

Local factors also contribute to languages identified as critical. For example, there was an increase in the teaching of Japanese in Ohio because of the growth of the automotive industry. Organizations such as banks or hospitals that serve populations of recent immigrants view Spanish and Somali as critical languages.

Factors that affect the identification of critical languages include the location of Ohio's international trade offices, the growth of certain industries, international corporate investment in the state and immigration. Taking all of these factors into consideration, it seems that increased proficiency in commonly taught languages such as French, German and Spanish, is critical for Ohio businesses, while less commonly taught languages, such as Arabic, Chinese and Japanese, are critical for future scientific and diplomatic efforts and economic growth. Changing world circumstances can influence the list of languages deemed critical.

What this means for world language education is that Ohio's students need opportunities to learn a broader range of languages in order to prepare them for future economic, diplomatic, educational and personal endeavors. Although it is impossible to determine exactly which languages will be critical in the future, research shows that learning additional languages is facilitated by learning a second language. In order to maintain proficiency in commonly taught languages, while encouraging proficiency in critical languages, Ohio's schools may offer students the opportunity to take a common language first, then add a more difficult language in later years. However, students also should have access to an uninterrupted sequence of instruction in one language in order to reach a higher level of language proficiency.

“To improve our national security, [the Committee for Economic Development] recommends expanding the training pipeline at every level of education to address the paucity of Americans fluent in foreign languages, especially critical, less-commonly taught languages such as Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Persian/Farsi, Russian and Turkish.”

—Committee for Economic Development (2006)





RECOMMENDATION

#3

Use proven programs with the goal of developing long sequences of PreK-16 language learning and advanced levels of proficiency.

The Foreign Language Advisory Council offers strategies to meet this recommendation at each of the different school levels:

PreK-12

- Fund at least one fully articulated PreK-12 pilot program in each of the 16 regions of the state.

Preschool

- Begin programs in preschool, when children are naturally acquiring oral language and pre-literacy skills.

Elementary

- Increase immersion programs that allow English-speaking students to learn at least half and up to all of their school subjects in a target language;
- Create dual immersion programs with a 50-50 split of heritage language learners and English language learners in school districts with a sufficient heritage language population, so that both groups of students become bilingual;
- Increase the number of elementary world language programs that meet for at least 90 minutes per week and reinforce content from other disciplines; and
- Deliver instruction via a range of technology with reinforcement by teachers or paraprofessionals.

DISCUSSION

Ohio can lead the nation by capitalizing on the successes of programs designed to increase proficiency at all levels of education, from preschool to postsecondary education. Language study should integrate communication skills, real-life learning experiences and educational content such as mathematics, science and social studies so that Ohioans can communicate with counterparts around the world on occupational and academic topics (“2007 U.S. Language Summits,” 2007).

It takes a long time to develop proficiency in a language. Creating opportunities for PreK-12 learners to study a language in long, articulated sequences will enable universities to develop advanced and superior language proficiency needed in the workforce.

STARTING EARLY

In the United States, language learning has traditionally been delayed until middle or high school. Brain research tells us, however, that puberty marks the end of the child's window for easily acquiring additional languages, rather than the beginning.

Why are children better equipped to learn world languages in their early years? Simply put, their brains are wired for it. From birth until puberty, the brain formats itself to perform various functions, like language. Neural networks form gradually, and they function better the more they are used. If a world language is part of the input the young brain receives, networks for understanding it and using it will continue to grow (Foust, 2003). Interaction with speakers of a world language causes connections to grow in the child's brain, which allows for easier learning in all languages. By age 12, however, the child's brain begins to shed connections it no longer uses (Foust, 2003). The brain slowly becomes less plastic, so that learning a new language becomes a greater challenge in adolescence (Kennedy, n.d.).

Younger children seem to have an advantage over their older peers in their openness to other cultures and their ability to develop native-like pronunciation. Their ease with pronunciation may be connected both to the physiological sensitivity of facial muscles and bones, as well as their psychological willingness to try out new sounds and make mistakes (Foust, 2003).

Bilingual children also appear to have an advantage in developing reading skills. Bilingual children who have been exposed to stories and literacy in both languages learn to read faster because they recognize more readily the symbolic relationship between letters or characters and sounds (Bialystok, 1999).

MODELS FOR EARLY LANGUAGE LEARNING

Children's proficiency level in a second language is closely linked to the amount of time and the level of intensity of the language program. In grades kindergarten through six, the two major types of second language programs are *immersion programs* and *Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES) programs*. The essential difference between the two types of programs is that immersion programs focus primarily on the teaching of subject content (e.g., language arts, math, social studies, science) through the second language. This means that children spend between 50 to 100 percent of their day learning through the language. In FLES programs, the primary focus is on teaching the second language. Students would typically have a separate language class (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2004). There are varieties of both types of programs.

The goals of immersion and FLES programs are outlined below, along with the time required and the student populations for each program type. Examples of existing programs in Ohio are listed.

Immersion goals:

- To become proficient in the target language;
- To master subject content taught in the target language; and
- To acquire understanding of and appreciation for other cultures.

Immersion program types:

Partial and total immersion

Time spent in foreign language per week: 50-100 percent

Student population: Primarily native speakers of English in grades K-8, but open to speakers of all languages

Programs in Ohio: Academy of World Languages, Cincinnati; Ecole Kenwood and Columbus Spanish Immersion Academy, Columbus

Dual immersion (also called two-way bilingual)

Time spent in foreign language per week: 50 percent in each language

Student population: Native speakers of English and native speakers of another language in grades K-6; all students learn subject matter through their native language, as well as through the second language and have the benefit of interaction with native speakers of the second language.

Programs in Ohio: Buhrer Elementary School, Cleveland

Content-based or enriched FLES goals:

- To acquire proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing the foreign language;
- To use subject content as a vehicle for acquiring the foreign language; and
- To acquire understanding of and appreciation for other cultures.

Time spent in foreign language per week: 30-40 minutes per class meeting, three to five times a week

Student population: All students in grades K-6

Programs in Ohio: Grove Patterson and Larchmont Elementary Schools, Toledo

Immersion programs lead to the greatest level of proficiency in the second language because of the amount of time and the intensity of instruction. They are, however, not feasible for all areas because of the challenge of finding certified elementary school teachers who are native or near-native speakers of the second language. FLES programs are often more feasible because they rely on language specialists or classroom teachers who have considerable fluency in the foreign language. Expanding alternative licensure to P-12 and creating an endorsement for teachers who are proficient in other languages could increase the pool of teachers for these program types.

TIME FOR EARLY LANGUAGE LEARNING

When recommendations are made to expand world language programs into the elementary grades, one of the most common concerns of teachers and administrators is how to make time for world language study in an already crowded learning day. Strong elementary language programs can, however, strengthen the achievement of younger students in other subject and skill areas.

The power of world language study to reinforce and enhance student learning and skills across all curricular areas is supported by 40 years of research. Students who study a foreign language “equal or surpass their monolingual peers on standardized tests of achievement” (Robinson and Conway, 2005, p. 47). Studies have shown that those who study a foreign language demonstrate the following benefits:

- Higher scores on standardized tests of reading and math (Dumas, 1999; Saunders, 1998; Armstrong & Rogers, 1997; Robinson, 1998; Garfinkel & Tabor, 1991; Rafferty, 1986; Webb, n.d.);
- Greater skills in divergent thinking and creativity (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2004)
- Higher self-concept (Curtain & Dahlberg, 2004); and
- Higher SAT/ACT scores (Robinson & Conway, 2005; Cooper, 1987).

It is crucial to note that the quality of the elementary program will determine the benefits to students. Because of the connection between time and intensity of instruction and the development of proficiency, national and state standards for foreign language learning are predicated on a minimum of 90 minutes per week in the elementary grades. Furthermore, brain research has shown that learners process and retain information more easily if the information is meaningful, engaging and connected to previous learning. Good elementary world language programs, therefore, do not present language as isolated words or disconnected cultural celebrations, but instead reinforce concepts from other subject areas. In this way, they complement the learning already happening in the classroom and use contexts that are familiar and interesting.

Elementary world language programs that reinforce concepts from across the curriculum offer multiple benefits to children. While learning the foreign language, the children deepen their understanding of grade-level concepts and reap the cognitive benefits of learning a new language.

Strategies for older learners include:

Middle and High School

- **Plan middle school and high school programs that build on instruction taking place in elementary school, so that learners are not forced to start over at a beginning level;**
- **Develop occupational world language courses, such as Spanish for school personnel, Somali for healthcare professionals or Arabic for business;**
- **Award credit through educational options for internship or service learning experiences where students use their world language skills;**
- **Continue funding intensive summer enrichment programs and camps, such as the Regents' Language Academies; and**
- **Encourage learners to acquire more than one world language, based on personal interest, community need or career goals.**

University and Adult Learners

- **Offer a variety of on-campus and online programs at convenient times so that more Ohioans have the opportunity to become proficient in a second language.**

DISCUSSION

At the sixth- through eighth-grade level, 19 percent of Ohio students are enrolled in language instruction. An array of program models exists, many of which do not lead to proficiency. Short-term experiences with language learning that last for nine, 12 or 16 weeks are common. These exploratory programs, which focus on cultural awareness and interest in foreign languages, are a less efficient use of resources than extended sequences of study that lead to proficiency.



RECOMMENDATION #4

Use multiple means to deliver language instruction.

The Foreign Language Advisory Council offers the following strategies to meet this recommendation:

- Supplement face-to-face delivery with a variety of synchronous and asynchronous delivery methods, such as encouraging districts to provide online and distance learning language courses and by creating online and face-to-face discussion group opportunities that include native or heritage speakers.
- Work with technical schools and community colleges to develop programs that lead toward professional skills in high-need languages in areas such as health care, social services and business;
- Develop immersion programs for high school and college students who already have a basic level of language proficiency;
- Develop language courses that are relevant and include real-world experiences;
- Expand the learning day by allowing students to learn language through services provided in the community; and
- Develop community-based programs that utilize the resources of the heritage language communities in Ohio to provide instruction.

DISCUSSION

On a global scale, technological advances are leveling educational opportunities and contributing to a world marketplace. Developed countries like the United States are competing and collaborating with other developed countries and emerging economies like China, India and regions of South America. Technology is enabling the exchange of ideas and reducing trade barriers.

Currently, few Ohio students are receiving world language instruction via technology. Ohio can capitalize on available technologies to offer a multitude of opportunities for students and educators at all levels of education to access and deliver language instruction. The use of technologies, such as distance learning and videoconferencing with native speakers, enables world language educators to provide access to language instruction in both urban and rural areas of Ohio. Meaningful conversations can bring the language to life for both students and teachers as they increase their language proficiency.

Multiple delivery systems also allow access to a wider variety of languages for all students. School-based programs with low enrollments in their own district could provide access electronically to many more students from other districts.

In order to implement this recommendation and its corresponding strategies policy leaders may consider the following:

- World language educators will need to investigate and evaluate programs such as Salsa, a Spanish language program created by Georgia Public Broadcasting for young learners;
- The collaboration of PreK-16 world language educators, community members, heritage speakers, and representatives of business and government will be required. They will need to identify courses and curricula for students, create meaningful professional development opportunities for teachers and develop online communities;
- Online courses and instructional materials should be developed in less commonly taught languages and should be available to all regions of the state. These courses and materials may be developed by partnerships between business and government, educators, institutions of higher education and visiting teachers from other countries; and
- Intensive summer or enrichment programs outside the school year should be expanded in order to allow students to jump-start the study of critical languages. Approximately 100 students began their formal study of Chinese, Russian, Arabic or Japanese at summer language academies in 2007. The academies enabled students to earn dual high school and college credit in these critical languages.

It will be necessary to evaluate the various delivery systems to assess strengths, weaknesses and promising practices. In this manner, Ohio language learners will have access to the best face-to-face and online instruction.

UPS looks for employees who are:

- **Global trade literate;**
- **Sensitive to foreign cultures;**
- **Conversant in different languages;**
- **Technology savvy;**
- **Capable of managing complexity;**
- and
- **Ethical.**

—Eskew (2005)





RECOMMENDATION #5

Grant world language credit based on demonstration of proficiency.

The Foreign Language Advisory Council offers four strategies to meet this recommendation:

- **Require all students to take a world language as part of the Ohio Core during high school or before;**
- **Use the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages' (ACTFL) levels to determine students' language proficiency (ACTFL recommends that learners reach at least intermediate-low proficiency in languages, such as French, Italian or Spanish, and at least novice-high proficiency in difficult languages, such as Chinese, Arabic or Japanese);**
- **Allow students to demonstrate proficiency on existing reliable and valid tests or to earn two traditional Carnegie units to meet the Ohio Core requirement; and**
- **Make existing reliable and valid proficiency testing available to all learners so that they may earn credit for their language proficiency.**

DISCUSSION

Ohio needs citizens who have the linguistic and cultural competencies necessary in an increasingly globalized society and diverse state population. If individuals understand one another's language and culture, they may avoid conflict that arises from misunderstanding, both on a national and local level. However, as many former students of world language study contend, they did not receive instruction that enabled them to communicate with non-English speakers or to understand their cultures. Unfortunately, students received credit for language study by mastering lists of vocabulary and grammatical concepts.

In order to meet the needs of Ohioans who will interact with non-English speakers, both in their local communities and in international settings, the world language profession must revise its expectations for students. Learning a language is not a matter of what one knows about the language, but what one can do with the language.

To meet the Council's recommendation of intermediate-low or novice-high proficiency, Ohio's students must have access to programs that allow for long sequences of instruction. Learning a world language is not unlike learning math. Students do not begin algebra in middle or high school without a strong foundation in mathematics from kindergarten through the elementary grades. Although the recommended requirement addresses high school graduation, the Council strongly recommends that language programs start as early as possible in order to enable all students to reach the recommended level of proficiency and

*Learning a language
is not a matter of
what one knows
about the language,
but what one can do
with the language.*

that language programs continue into upper levels for those students who are capable of achieving higher levels of proficiency. Just as students who are capable of moving beyond algebra should have access to calculus, language students should have access to upper level and AP classes.

All content areas will need to consider new ways for students to demonstrate proficiency. Amended Substitute SB 311 states, “The State Board of Education, in consultation with the Ohio Board of Regents and the Partnership for Continued Learning, shall adopt a statewide plan implementing methods for students to earn units of high school credit based on demonstration of subject area competency, instead of or in combination with completing hours of classroom instruction. The State Board shall adopt the plan not later than March 31, 2009 and commence phasing in the plan during the 2009-2010 school year.”

Fortunately, the world language profession has the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines and the corresponding Performance Guidelines for K-12 Learners, as described earlier in this report on pages 12-13. Reliable and valid assessments scored in alignment with the definitions of proficiency have already been developed and used.

The use of the proficiency scale also provides a means of granting credit for and encouraging language proficiency that has been gained outside the school. Ohio’s student population is growing more and more diverse, and Ohio should encourage students who can communicate in a language other than English to maintain and expand their proficiency in those languages. Promoting additive bilingualism, which encourages heritage speakers who are learning English to value and strengthen their home languages instead of eradicating them, will benefit Ohio.

NATIVE AND HERITAGE LANGUAGE SPEAKERS

Native speakers are speakers of languages other than English who have acquired the language from birth. Their oral and written skills are not distinguishable from speakers who reside in the country where the language is spoken (Draper & Hicks, 2000).

Heritage language speakers have a home background in a language other than English. They are an extraordinarily diverse group depending on where they were born, how much schooling they have had in their first language, what academic skills they have in English and what dialect they speak in their first language (Draper & Hicks, 2000).

Some heritage speakers can understand their first language when it is spoken but cannot respond in the language. Some can speak it fluently, but have no reading or writing skills in the language. Because of the variety of strengths they have in their first language, these students are generally not well-served by world language classes aimed primarily at beginners.

Heritage speakers may have mixed feelings about their first language as a result of negative societal reactions to the language or to their ethnic background. If they speak a dialect of their first language, they may have trouble being understood even by teachers of that language who generally know the standard version. Their parents may want their children to focus on learning English in schools rather than their first language because they perceive English to be the language of opportunity.

As humans, all students are endowed with the capacity to learn language. Exemptions to the Ohio Core as defined in SB 311 would apply to world language requirements for children with profound disabilities or where parents do not feel that language study is in the best interest of the child. However, students who have disabilities should not automatically be denied access to language programs. Established proficiency-based language programs have developed intervention programs for students who are not reaching appropriate levels. All students can learn a language, given the appropriate accommodations and assistance.

The use of proficiency rather than seat-time as a means of awarding credit is a new concept being used in some language programs. The Foreign Language Advisory Council recommends the following means of support in moving the state's teachers toward the proficiency model:

- Students who have developed proficiency through non-school means, such as study abroad, intensive summer institutes or commercial products should have access to proficiency tests through the schools;
- Teachers must receive training in using national assessments of proficiency;
- Teachers who are already using proficiency as a guiding construct in their language programs should be trained to provide professional development for their peers;
- There should be a phase-in period to collect data on the proficiency levels reached by students before holding students accountable for reaching a certain level for high school graduation;
- The required levels of proficiency should be reviewed periodically; and
- In schools with a critical mass of heritage language learners, courses such as Spanish for Spanish speakers should be developed to enable students to maintain and strengthen their language proficiency. Some heritage speakers can understand the spoken version of their first language but cannot converse in it. Some can converse fluently in their first language, but have no reading or writing skills in the language.

“Research shows that learning a second (or a third and a fourth) language develops a person’s analytical abilities more effectively than learning a single language. We also know that learning a second language increases one’s understanding of one’s native language. To the extent that foreign language learning improves a student’s cognitive and academic performance, it goes hand in glove with the No Child Left Behind goal of ensuring high student outcomes for all children.”

—Rod Paige, former Secretary of Education
(as cited in Abbott, 2003, p. 140)

DIFFERENT LANGUAGES REQUIRE DIFFERENT AMOUNTS OF TIME

Are some languages harder to learn than others? Depending on the language studied, students may require more time to move up the proficiency scale. While Western languages taught in most American schools have similarities to English in their written and oral forms, less commonly taught languages, such as Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Russian, have more unfamiliar sounds, different writing systems and new grammars (ACTFL, 1998).

The difficulty level of different languages has been considered and studied in academic settings and government agencies. Based on research collected by the FSI, languages have been put into four groups based on the amount of time required for students with superior aptitude for language to reach an advanced level of speaking proficiency:

GROUP	EXAMPLES OF LANGUAGES	HOURS REQUIRED FOR SUPERIOR CANDIDATES TO REACH ADVANCED LEVEL OF SPEAKING
Group I	French, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish	720 hours
Group II	Farsi, German, Greek, Hindi	1320 hours
Group III	Polish, Russian, Turkish, Vietnamese	1320 hours *
Group IV	Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Korean	2400-2760 hours

**In the advanced range, but not as advanced as Group II*

(Hadley, 2001)

Given that a four-year high school sequence lasts only 480 hours, it is clear that it would be very challenging for the typical high school student to reach an advanced level of speaking proficiency without additional time. However, research has encouraging results for reaching the intermediate level of proficiency in a shorter time (Hadley, 2001).





RECOMMENDATION #6

Increase the number and build the capacity of qualified world language instructors in the state of Ohio.

The Foreign Language Advisory Council offers six strategies to meet this recommendation:

- **Continue to recruit and fund licensure for heritage and native speakers as instructors and paraprofessionals;**
- **Change current alternative licensure for world language teachers from the current 7-12 license to align with traditional world language licensure, which is PreK-12;**
- **Require teacher candidates to demonstrate proficiency on the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) as a condition for licensure. ACTFL recommends advanced-low for languages such as Spanish, French and German. For difficult languages, ACTFL recommends intermediate-high.**
- **Create a world language endorsement to the regular teaching license of teachers of other subjects who have advanced-low/intermediate-high proficiency in a language;**
- **Expand teachers' abilities to utilize current and emerging technologies, including teaching in an online environment and distance learning; and**
- **Increase teachers' skills in teaching and assessing, so that students of differing ability levels can learn to interpret, speak, read and write languages and develop sensitivity to and understanding of other cultures.**

DISCUSSION

If Ohio students are to become proficient speakers of more than one language, they must have qualified instructors. Although some students may have access to language materials through technology or have gained proficiency outside of school, it is the teacher who is the primary link between the student and the target language.

The need for more teachers has resulted in creative avenues of recruitment. The State of Wyoming uses Salsa, a program created by Georgia Public Broadcasting, and face-to-face instruction with paraprofessionals to bring language to primary school children. These paraprofessionals are being recruited into teaching.

Recruiting heritage speakers who live in Ohio already has increased the pool of teachers. There were five intensive licensure programs in 2007 alone that prepared 110 candidates to teach French, Spanish, Japanese, Chinese or Arabic. Traditional programs generally license around 225 teachers a year. If funding continues for these programs, Ohio could have enough teachers to reach all students by 2014. A public-service campaign to recruit heritage and native language speakers and second-career business professionals to the language teaching profession could increase this flow of candidates.

High school and college students with high interest and proficiency in languages are another potential source of world language teachers. Incentivizing teaching as a career path through state and federal grants and loan forgiveness programs could attract them to teaching in Ohio.

Traditional licensure candidates and heritage and native speakers must have sufficient language proficiency themselves to teach listening, speaking, reading and writing. Ohio colleges and universities that prepare world language specialists must meet the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)/ACTFL program standards to receive national accreditation and state approval. The ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) is a required measure for program approval. While there were problems with the administration of the Praxis II oral assessment, the OPI has a long tradition of reliable and valid administration and scoring.

World language teachers also need continuous professional development opportunities to maintain and increase their own language proficiency, international understandings, assessment skills and technology skills. Professional development for beginning and practicing world language teachers is best accomplished through collaboration of teacher education programs, professional associations, ODE and school districts. To maintain and expand their own language proficiency, teachers need contact with Ohio's heritage communities, opportunities to study abroad or opportunities for participation in virtual target language environments. They also need job-embedded professional development that focuses on proficiency-based teaching, learning and assessment. Encouraging world language teachers to become National Board Certified by pairing certified teachers with recruits is one means of promoting job-embedded professional development.

WORLD LANGUAGE STUDY FOR ALL STUDENTS

The time has come to shed the notion that world language study should be reserved for the “best” students or those “college-bound.” In a class of kindergartners, how can a teacher know for sure which children are the “best” or “college-bound”? All children are capable of learning language; they are, in fact, wired to learn language. Fortunately, in today's proficiency-oriented classroom, in which world languages are taught through interaction, students of all learning styles and backgrounds have greater opportunities for success.

Students with disabilities

Students in today's language classrooms reflect the diversity of students in the general student population. They may have disabilities that require accommodations in the world language classroom. These accommodations are spelled out in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP), which is determined through assessment of the student and consultation among special education teachers, classroom teachers, administrators and parents.

While each student's accommodations will be unique, some typical techniques for working with students with learning disabilities include the following:

- Developing a communicative rather than a grammar-oriented classroom;
- Establishing predictable daily routines;
- Giving simple instructions;
- Presenting small amounts of material, with frequent review and repetition;
- Using pre-listening and pre-reading activities to activate background knowledge and providing comprehension questions prior to and after activities;
- Using multisensory (e.g., kinesthetic, tactile) approaches to teaching;

- Providing opportunities for all students to interact with one another to promote understanding, respect and a helpful environment;
- Giving extra time on tests and assignments;
- Maintaining realistic expectations and measuring progress in terms of students' abilities;
- Providing individualized work with feedback; and
- Making special provisions for assessment (Ohio Department of Education, 2003, pp. 159-160).

It should be noted that these approaches to language teaching are beneficial for all students. Even students who are not identified as having a learning disability learn in different ways. A communicative focus in language teaching, coupled with a variety of approaches, meets the needs of all students.

Students with physical disabilities also will require accommodations that are unique to them. Some typical accommodations in the language classroom include:

- Students with limited physical movement may need to give responses orally or in written form rather than using gestures or full-body movements;
- Students with hearing impairments may require visual supports such as scripts for listening activities; and
- Students with visual impairments may need to give responses orally rather than in written form. They may require Braille texts or text-recognition technology and extra time to process texts (Ohio Department of Education, 2003, p.159).

Gifted students

Given the unique combination of learning styles, learning preferences and backgrounds of each student, many educators believe that teachers should “identify the giftedness in each learner” (Shrum & Glisan, 2005, p. 333). Certain students, however, demonstrate high performance in intellectual and artistic endeavors, leadership and specific academic fields. These students, too, are part of the general student population that will appear in the world language classroom.

Gifted students may be especially strong in the following aspects of language learning:

- Recognizing patterns and figuring out underlying grammatical structures;
- Using memory skills in learning vocabulary;
- Creating responses to open-ended activities; and
- Pursuing independent projects.

In the mixed-ability classroom, teachers can address the strengths of gifted students by offering individual choice in assignments and an accelerated pace or levels in materials (Ohio Department of Education, 2003, p. 162). World language classes that rely too heavily on drilling of material may become boring for gifted students. As for all students, a focus on meaningful communication is essential for maintaining gifted students' interest and promoting their language proficiency.

Summary

World language teachers, like teachers of all disciplines, must respond to the needs of the students in their classes. Fortunately, many of the strategies that benefit special populations are solid teaching strategies for all students. Rather than being overwhelmed by the mixed abilities of their students, world language teachers should view the accommodations required by their students as ways of ensuring that all students, even those with no identified need, can gain proficiency in the language.

BUILDING ON A STRONG FOUNDATION

The Foreign Language Advisory Council recognizes that the recommendations and strategies outlined in this report are ambitious goals for world language education in Ohio. Many of the recommendations expand on existing programs and require few resources to align current world language programs with the ideals expressed in this report.

EXISTING PROGRAMS

Some existing initiatives that support the recommendations of the Foreign Language Advisory Council include:

- **K-12 foreign language academic content standards:** The State Board of Education adopted K-12 foreign language academic content standards in December 2003. Grade-level expectations for what students should know and be able to do provide specificity in a manner consistent with a proficiency-based approach to language teaching and learning;
- **Proficiency assessments:** There are a number of pre-existing, reliable and valid instruments that Ohio can use to measure proficiency. Many of them were developed from assessments that the federal government has employed for years to ensure that U.S. citizens have adequate language capabilities for their assignments. These assessments include a range of languages and learner populations. Some target elementary children; others are more appropriate for adolescents and adults. Consequently, there is no need for ODE to create tests. Many states already avail themselves of these resources and the federal government recommends them as a means to demonstrate proficiency. (See page 32.)
- **Regents' Academies for Chinese, Russian, Arabic and Japanese:** Summer enrichment opportunities have been funded so that students can earn dual credit in high school and college during intensive instruction. Approximately 100 students began their formal study of these critical languages during the summer of 2007 and continued through individualized instruction;
- **Alternative licensure programs:** In 2007, five intensive licensure programs in French, Spanish, Japanese, Chinese and Arabic prepared 110 candidates to teach in Ohio's schools. By way of comparison, traditional licensure programs in Ohio's 25 teacher preparation programs usually produce 225 teachers, mostly in Spanish, French and German;
- **Visiting teacher programs:** Since 2006, a small number of native speakers from Spain, the People's Republic of China and Taiwan have been recruited to teach in Ohio's schools. These teachers provide invaluable sources of authentic language and cultural information.

EXISTING PROFICIENCY MEASURES

Test	Grades or Ages	Languages Available	Skills Measured
Early Language Listening and Oral Proficiency Assessment (ELLOPA)	PreK-grade 2	All languages	Listening, oral fluency, grammar, vocabulary
Student Oral Proficiency Assessment (SOPA)	Grades 2-8	French, German, Japanese, Spanish	Listening, oral fluency, grammar, vocabulary
National Online Early Language Learning Assessment (NOELLA)	Grades 3-6	French, Spanish (Chinese, Japanese in development)	Listening, speaking, reading, writing Listening, speaking
STAndards-based Measurement of Proficiency (STAMP)	Grades 7-16	Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Spanish (Arabic, Korean, Russian in development)	Speaking, reading, writing (Listening in development)
The Ohio State University's Collaborative Articulation and Assessment Project (CAAP) Early Assessment Measures	Grades 9-12 with three years of language	French, German, Spanish	Listening, speaking, reading, writing
College Board Advanced Placement (AP)	Grades 7-12	Chinese, French, German, Latin, Italian, Japanese, Spanish (Russian in development) Latin	Listening, speaking, reading, writing Reading, writing
ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI)	Ages 14 through adult	50 languages tested	Speaking
ACTFL Writing Proficiency Test (WPT)	Ages 14 through adult	50 languages tested	Writing

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES

To expand on existing programs and address the recommendations of this report, the Foreign Language Advisory Council offers the following suggestions to assist the state's educational policy leaders and educators in beginning to realize the vision of an exemplary world language education program.

- **Develop a public relations campaign:** In order to expand the public's understanding of the value of world languages to the state, a public relations campaign could address the following issues:
 - ☐ Importance of long sequences of instruction to develop professional-level language proficiency;
 - ☐ Promotion of language learning in early grades;
 - ☐ Maintaining heritage languages while learning English, to promote additive bilingualism;
 - ☐ Importance of language proficiency to Ohio's economy; and
 - ☐ Recruitment of heritage and native speakers and second-career business professionals to the world language teaching profession.
- **Create consortia:** Stakeholders will need to work together to realize the majority of the Council's recommendations. Fortunately, the issues to be addressed call on the existing expertise of PreK-16 world language educators, business representatives, community members and government representatives. Consortia should address the following priorities:
 - ☐ School-community partnerships, including the development of occupational courses, internship opportunities and volunteer opportunities for students;
 - ☐ Technological initiatives, including the development of online courses and instructional materials, the evaluation of existing online and distance learning programs and the professional development of world language teachers;
 - ☐ Proficiency-based programs, including the piloting of proficiency programs, the selection of assessment instruments and the review of proficiency levels as a requirement for graduation;
 - ☐ Teacher professional development, including recruitment of teachers, assessment of teachers' proficiency and professional development opportunities focused on language and culture learning; and
 - ☐ Model programs, including the expansion of existing high school programs into middle schools, the development of additional immersion and dual immersion programs, and the expansion of content-enriched elementary programs and preschool programs.

LEGISLATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

The report recommends these legislative changes:

- Including world languages in the Ohio CORE graduation requirements (at or before high school level); and
- Funding administration of existing, recognized assessments to determine proficiency.

The following recommendations would require changes to Ohio Administrative Code:

- Extending alternative licensure for foreign language to elementary grades; and
- Adding a world languages endorsement to teacher licenses.

FINDING RESOURCES

Resources must be allocated for quality language education to realize the vision of a population proficient in languages in addition to English. The suggestions below represent a starting point to think about how time and money might be used most efficiently.

Time for world language instruction: One of the fundamental concerns of administrators who believe in creating world language programs that start in the early grades and continue for long sequences is finding time in the school day. Suggestions for the educational continuum are included below.

- ❑ **Starting early:** Fifty years of research substantiates the fact that time learning a world language is time well spent. Children who have quality world language programs tied to the regular school curriculum equal or outperform children who do not have such experiences on standardized tests of achievement given in English. This holds true for children of various ethnicities, as well as children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Quality programs should meet for at least 90 minutes per week and reinforce concepts from across disciplines using the target language as the medium of instruction. The world language specialist should work with grade-level teams to plan content-related programs. For example, kindergarten children might practice sequencing shapes of different colors in another language. Older children could graph results from a survey about pets and explain their findings in the target language. In this manner, children become proficient in another language and do as well as or better than children who have not experienced other languages on standardized tests of achievement.

In most settings, elementary teachers have a scheduled planning period. During that time, students are typically involved in physical education, arts or music classes. Foreign languages could be incorporated in that rotation. Some teachers may stay in the room with the language specialist and learn the language with the children. This enables reinforcement when the specialist is gone.

- ❑ **Middle and high school:** In many middle schools, scores from state achievement tests or class grades are used as criteria for access to world language instruction. Research is clear: literacy skills transfer across languages and learning a second language often results in the ability to look at one's own language more systematically, leading to increased achievement. Students who are being denied access to language programs because of test scores could actually achieve more if they are given an opportunity to learn a new language.

World language specialists can be part of planning teams to reinforce concepts from across disciplines. For example, students can identify locations using map skills, investigate and share findings on how geography and climate influence the lives of people in countries that speak the language they are studying, or convert currency and units of measurement. Again, this leads to proficiency in another language and equal or higher test scores on standardized tests of achievement.

Under Ohio's current operating standards, middle school students may earn credit toward graduation from high school for experiences in world languages that are equivalent to high school courses and are taught by appropriately credentialed teachers. Since all world language specialists are credentialed to teach high school, learning a language in middle school is a way to free up time in their high school schedules. If more students took beginning language in middle school or before, they would have more time for advanced-level courses in all disciplines once in high school. Similarly, students who wish to attend career and technical centers would be able to develop beginning language proficiency upon which to build career-specific technical vocabulary.

A student's learning day should not be restricted to traditional hours of school operation. Opportunities for language learning are plentiful. Learners listen to downloadable lessons, access multimedia presentations, record themselves speaking the language, write in chat rooms using the target language, and engage in face-to-face interaction through video hook ups. Alternatives to brick-and-mortar courses also prepare students for postsecondary education, self-guided instruction in the workplace and independent learning. Students also may learn languages in after school programs or weekend programs sponsored by heritage schools.

Funding long sequences of instruction: A commitment to language education in Ohio also requires some financial commitment. This investment in world language education is an investment in Ohio's long-term economic well-being and security. In some cases, existing funds may be reallocated to support quality language learning experiences. In other cases, partnerships between education and government, business and community organizations can increase opportunities to learn languages. It also will be necessary to seek or allocate new funds to realize the vision of a linguistically proficient citizenry.

- ❑ **Reallocating existing funds:** Immersion, dual immersion, or content-related early language learning programs are cost effective because language teachers are teaching regular subject areas. These programs do not require additional staff positions for languages, but they do require administrations that are dedicated to recruiting bilingual staff.

Currently, over 21,000 Ohio students are enrolled in exploratory programs that meet for short periods of time and do not develop proficiency. These students start over once they enter a traditional course sequence. Funds for these exploratory programs should be reallocated to support quality programs. Quality elementary programs meet at least 90 minutes per week to reinforce concepts across the curriculum; middle school programs for novices should approximate at least the first level of high school and build toward language proficiency.

Encouraging high school students to persist in long sequences of language instruction saves parent, student and taxpayer dollars at the postsecondary level because students tend to place into higher college courses instead of repeating beginning levels.

Awarding credit by proficiency may enable districts to reallocate funds from traditional courses to a broader range of learning opportunities, including upper-level courses, immersion experiences that incorporate service learning or language for specific careers.

- ❑ **Building partnerships:** Districts could create consortia to share resources that support curriculum development and face-to-face or online instruction. Districts might jointly offer critical languages or upper-level and AP courses. In addition, partnerships can develop and offer language experiences tied to careers, such as Spanish for health care.

Partnerships with business, government and community organizations could create language learning projects, service learning opportunities and internships. Rich collaborations such as these enable learners of all ages to access relevant, real-world language learning opportunities.

Intensive language opportunities, such as Regents' Academies and dual enrollment take advantage of teaching capacity in higher education.

- Regents' Academies enable high school students to study critical languages such as Japanese, Arabic, Chinese and Russian in intensive summer institutes. Students complete courses through independent study or weekend classes and earn both high school and college credit.

- Dual enrollment options provide students with a greater variety of choices, particularly in high schools that are unable to offer particular languages due to small size or inadequate funding. Students can take classes at a nearby university or enroll in an online college course. This may be a more cost-effective means of creating opportunities for students than hiring local teachers.
 - Each of the 16 regions of the state has received Ohio Core capacity-building funds to create dual enrollment programs. Many of these initiatives include a world languages component. Students who avail themselves of these opportunities earn high school and college credit, often in languages tied to a career field.
- ❑ **Federal grants:** There are several competitive federal grants that fund language programs. The Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP) is administered through the U.S. Department of Education. These grants fund collaborative approaches to program development between districts and other educational entities to develop curriculum and deliver instruction. Proposals are generally released in the spring and are due in June. Information is available online at www.grants.gov.

STARTALK funds flow from the National Security Language Initiative. They provide innovative means to deliver critical language instruction to middle high school students during the summer. In addition, STARTALK provides professional development opportunities for teachers of Arabic and Chinese. As with the FLAP funds, most successful proposals are collaborative in nature. The National Foreign Language Center Web site has information on funding and available programs at www.nflc.org.

- ❑ **New funds:** Between 2008 and 2014 some new funding will be needed each year to phase in the recommendations of this report. Some recommendations, such as changes to licensure, have little associated cost. Others may be seen as cost sharing at the state and local levels. Some funding will be required to:
- Implement model P-12 pilot programs in each region;
 - Develop online and distance learning courses, including career-focused language courses;
 - Administer existing language proficiency assessments to students as an alternate way of earning credit;
 - Employ additional teachers;
 - Train teachers to use new technologies, focus on methods that lead to functional communication and understand how proficiency assessments are scored.

CONCLUSION

An old African proverb states, “Start where you are, but don’t stay there.” Ohio has much to be proud of, when one considers the wealth of initiatives and the exemplary programs that exist in the state. In order to realize the vision of an educated, global citizenry that will support the state’s economy and provide leadership in cross-cultural collaboration, the state’s world language programs cannot stay at their current level. The recommendations and strategies outlined by the Foreign Language Advisory Council provide a vision for sustaining current efforts and expanding programs so that every child in Ohio has the opportunity to develop proficiency in a world language.

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*Any opinions, findings and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Security Education Program (NSEP).

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